Shoreline Permitting at the County Level

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Review Process

- Preliminary Review
- Environmental Permits & Review
- Buffer Management Plans
- Maintenance Requirements
- **i** Inspections
- Frequently Asked Questions

Preliminary Review

Projects with Joint Permit Approval:

If an application is submitted and it already has the MDE/ACOE approval, then an Environmental Review takes place

Projects without Joint Permit Approval:

- If an application is submitted without MDE/ACOE approval, the application will receive a preliminary review to determine if the proposed project meets County permit requirements
- If the application is in compliance with County requirements, the project is put on hold pending receipt of the MDE/ACOE permit

What is required for an Environmental Permit Application?

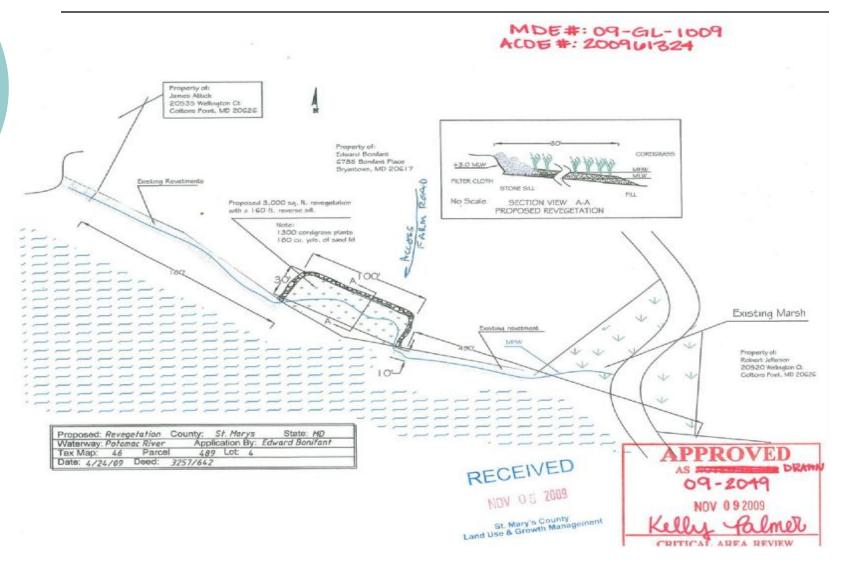
For All Projects:

- A site plan, drawn to scale, showing:
 - *your entire property,
 - *all existing structures and vegetation
 - *the project you are proposing
 - *all proposed disturbance
- Photographs of the Area to be disturbed and any vegetation to be removed
- The subdivision plat for your neighborhood/deed history dating back to at least 1978 (to determine parcel of record status)

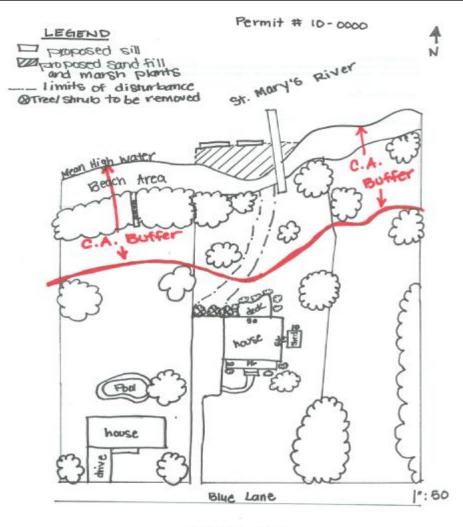
For Projects At or Below Mean High Water:

A copy of your Approved Maryland Department of the Environment/Army Corps of Engineers joint permit or the joint permit application that you submitted for review if the approval has not yet been received

Example of an Acceptable Site Plan (computer generated)



Example of an Acceptable Site Plan (hand drawn)



Example Plan

Environmental Review

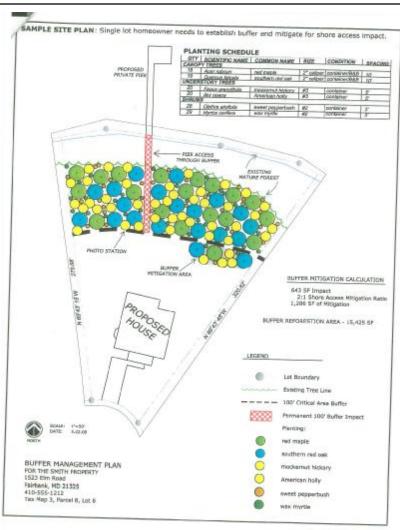
- During this review, County staff will calculate the area of proposed disturbance landward of mean high water
- Staff will review your project application for :
 - Disturbance/removal of vegetation
 - Areas of proposed fill
 - Areas of proposed grading
 - Potential impacts to sensitive species and habitats
 - (i.e. American Bald Eagle nesting sites, colonial water bird nesting sites, sub-aquatic vegetation, etc.)

Environmental Review, cont'd

If your project proposes any disturbance to the Critical Area Buffer, you will be required to complete a Buffer Management Plan

Buffer Management Plans

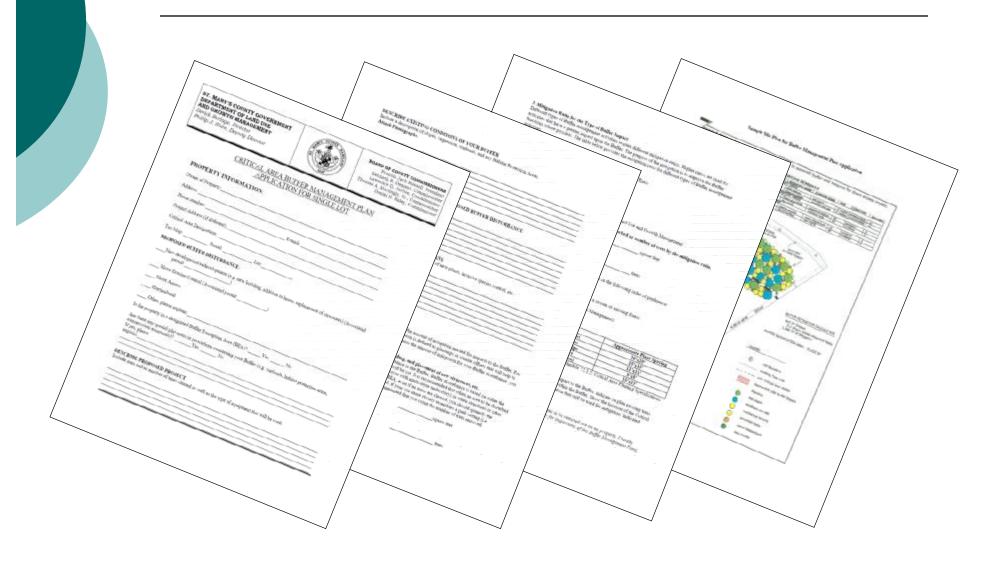
- Buffer management plans are designed to make landowners stop and think about future development plans they have for their properties
- The purpose of the plan is to illustrate areas of proposed plantings and to describe how they will be maintained.
- to show proposed access paths to the shoreline and any future proposed shoreline activity (i.e.
 - piers, boat ramps, etc.)



Required Plantings

- Buffer Management Plans are used for mitigation and afforestation of lots
- If your lot does not contain a minimum of 15% forest cover, then you are required to afforest your lot up to that 15%
- If you are proposing to disturb the Critical Area Buffer, mitigation is required at a ratio of 3:1 for all proposed areas of fill, and 1:1 for access paths and work areas needed for your project

Buffer Management Plan Document



What is Required for Buffer Management Plans?

- A site plan, drawn to scale, illustrating:
 - your entire property,
 - all structures,
 - all existing vegetation and proposed vegetation, and
 - the location of the Critical Area Buffer
- Photographs of the existing vegetation within the Critical Area Buffer
- The plan should also include a chart showing the proposed tree and shrub species and the total number of each species to be planted. All species must be native to the Coastal Plain in Maryland and salt tolerant!!!

Maintenance Requirements

- Living Shoreline projects and all shoreline projects are required to be maintained to ensure survivability
- Your maintenance plans should be included in your buffer management plan, but you should also maintain the area just like you would your existing property (i.e. pick up trash, remove invasive species, etc.)
- Routine, unannounced inspections may be conducted by County Staff and/or M.D.E. Compliance Inspectors to make sure that the project is being maintained per the Buffer Management Plan or Approved tidal wetlands permit

Inspections

- An initial inspection must be requested once the project has been completed by contacting M.D.I.A. This inspection will verify that the project is within the limits of the approved permit and that all vegetation has been properly installed.
 - 2 years after the initial project installation, unless requested earlier, County Zoning Inspectors will visit the project site to verify the survivability rate of the required vegetation/mitigation
 - If any of the required vegetation is not surviving at the time of this inspection, the customer is required to replant the dead vegetation. If less than a 60% survivability rate exists, the customer is required to post a bond in the amount of the required plantings until this survivability rate is met.







Q: If I have an eroding shoreline, do I need a permit or buffer management plan to plant vegetation in an attempt to stabilize my shoreline?

A: No. You can always plant trees, shrubs, grasses, and other types of ground cover without a permit or buffer management plan in an attempt to stabilize your shoreline. Gardening in the Buffer is also allowed without a permit because it is a temporary disturbance.

FAQ's cont'd

i Q: Does the County provide any incentives for citizens wanting to construct a living shoreline?

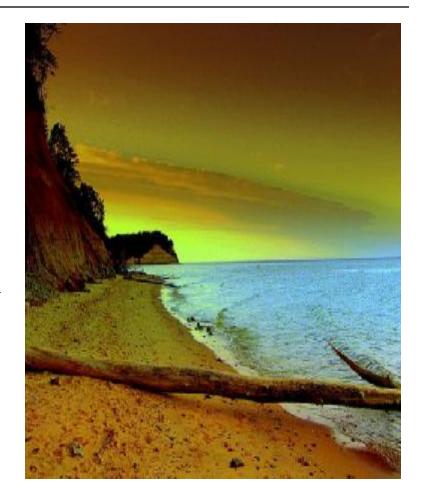
A: Currently, the County allows customers wishing to construct living shorelines to avoid a buffer management plan as long as there is minimal disturbance to the Critical Area Buffer and no woody vegetation is removed.

FAQ's cont 'd

Q: Are there any areas of St. Mary's County where living shorelines may not work?

A: Areas along the Chesapeake Bay and the tidal Patuxent River may be unsuitable for living shorelines. The increased area of fetch can interfere with the growth of the wetland grasses. Water depth in these areas may interfere with the establishment of fill and plantings as well. In these areas, structural measures may work best.

*MDE has set up a waiver process to allow landowners to place structural measures where non-structural measures will not work. For more information on the waiver process, please contact Alex Roy with the Maryland Department of the Environment.



Questions?



Thanks!!



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